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HOUSTON BUSINESS LEAGUE

HOUSTON, TEXAS

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HOUSTON

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COMMERCIAL CAPITAL OF TEXAS



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Looking North from Main Street and Capitol Avenue

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HOUSTON, TEXAS

INTRODUCTION.

IN ORDER that the great volume of questions relative to Houston and the adjacent territory, known as the Gulf Coast Country of Texas, may be readily answered, the HOUSTON BUSINESS LEAGUE has compiled this book. Every precaution has been taken to guard against exaggerated statements and misrepresentation. To the investigator these facts and figures are frankly submitted.

You will learn here why Houston stands as the greatest cotton center in the world, why she is supreme as a shipping and distributing point, why she has grown and expanded by leaps and bounds and why she possesses a brighter future than any other city in the great Southwest, towards which the eyes of the nation are now turned as the section destined to become the mightiest wealth-producing territory in this empire of states.

A city long following the path of progress at a quiet but steadfast pace, Houston has, in a few years, undergone changes which have brought her into national prominence, especially as a jobbing and general commercial center. Houston's entire history has been without "boom" characteristics; and these remarkable changes have arisen from such a union of natural conditions and circumstances as seldom exists. Already the cotton center of the world, and being in touch with all the great trunk lines of the vast and growing Southwest, there was nothing needed to bring about large

city growth, save a denser settlement of the fertile lands in the country of which Houston is the natural concentrating and distributing point. The discovery of rich oil deposits in adjacent fields has given great impetus to the business of Houston and the Coast Country, which is now rapidly filling with new home-seekers and business-seekers from every part of the Union. The work of improving the Houston Ship Channel, undertaken by the United States Government at a cost of \$4,000,000, will soon admit to our furnaces, at much lower cost than heretofore, the coal fuel available to ocean craft at many ports.

The energy and friendship of the great railway systems centering or ending in Houston, and other potent agencies, have helped to set before the world the wealth of the Coast Country to such an extent that the tide of immigration has now set strongly in this direction.

The early growth of Houston was retarded by the disheartening calamities of the Civil War, with the long years of healing required to put her again on good footing, under altogether changed conditions, by replacing with a new generation of men those who lost their lives and their hopes in battle; but Houston has wholly triumphed in her second growth, and has become the largest and most firmly founded city of the Southwest. Kept together through her years of trial and remaking by a healthy determination and conservatism, which alone could win under the circumstances, Houston is now in the day of her power a cosmopolitan and enterprising modern city, dominated by a fortunate combination of the Southern spirit and the true



Government Work in the Ship Channel

Western spirit, which has made Texas the greatest State of the entire South and Southwest. In the past fifteen years particularly Houston has been blest by the coming from all parts of the country—North, South, East and West—of large numbers of vigorous and loyal people; and the best elements of the old and the new form a prosperous, confident and congenial whole. The writer of this, a man from the far North, can unhesitatingly say that the newcomer is not met here by any spirit of sectionalism, but finds himself, if a good citizen, in an atmosphere of good will and good cheer.

These conditions, together with other elements of substantial strength and merit, some of which appear in the following pages, cannot fail to impress those who investigate Houston and her resources with the fact that it is Houston's destiny to be and remain for all time the transportation, manufacturing and jobbing center of the Southwest.

The reader is referred to the various paragraphs upon subsequent pages for information upon particular subjects in which he may be interested.

As a Place of Residence.

Aside from the strong attraction offered in the way of business opportunities, Houston's many advantages as a residence city have greatly aided her growth. The wide and leafy appearance of the place, the profusion of flowers and fresh vegetables of all varieties throughout the year, the mild winter climate, the almost ceaseless Gulf breezes in summer, resulting in a temperature and atmospheric condition in which sunstroke is unknown, the modern street paving and the excellent street car service, the many direct railway outlets to all points of the compass, the number of beautiful driveways extending far into the country, the un-



Cotton Exchange Building

usually good "shopping" facilities, the excellent fire protection, and various other things of the kind, at once appeal to the visitor and homeseeker as important items bearing upon the home question.

We shall, under appropriate headings, mention the churches, the public and private schools, libraries, etc., things of prime importance in the make-up of a residence city. The unequalled advantages soon to be offered by the great Rice Institute for literary, artistic, technical and industrial education and research, will bring a large number of families and individual students here for permanent residence and instruction. No other city of the entire South will present an equal attraction of this particular kind. The institution will lend to Houston a tone and a direction in the higher things of life such as no city can acquire except from the possession of a great institution of learning and culture; and we refer to it at greater length on another page.

Population and Area.

WE DO NOT DEPEND ON SQUARE MEASURE.

The United States census for 1890 gave Houston a population of only 27,557. In 1900, with an area of nine square miles, just one-fourth of the area of the next largest city of the State, the census gave us 44,663. Since the taking of that census the city limits have been extended, and the population has been very greatly increased by the constant arrival of new residents. Based on the recognized ratio of three persons to each name included in the City Directory, in the year 1907 Houston and the connected suburbs had a population of over 103,000, and the population may therefore be conservatively given at 100,000, including the immediate and unseparated suburbs which are a part of the daily life of Houston.

The new city limits embrace sixteen square miles,



New Court House (Under Contract)

or in all less than 44 per cent. of the area of San Antonio. The Houston settelment, irrespectiv of the

and the many paralel and intersecting streets, the territory is bilt up like a city for a mile and a quarter.



Five Houston Hotels

corporation, still extends far beyond the new limits mentioend; and westwardly, along Washington Road

To the east in the territory of the Harrisburg Road, this is tru for a greater distance, but the settelment

is less compact. The average elevation is 54.1 feet above the sea. Mean high tide is about 1.87 feet.

Commission Government.

HOUSTON'S MODEL CHARTER.

In July, 1905, Houston inaugurated her present system of government, an elective commission. A mayor and four aldermen, or as they are most commonly designated, commissioners, are elected to serve for a term of two years. Upon the shoulders of the mayor rests largely the success or failure of his administration. He is in reality made the head of the affairs of the city, employing and discharging the men who fill the various departments, and even these departments are not fixed, it lying within the discretion of the mayor and commissioners to create such as are needed or do away with those found needless. Houston is operated in the same manner as is a great business or private corporation. The commission system was not resorted to until after serious debate and consideration and was decided upon for the purpose of shielding the city from mercenary politics and guaranteeing a business administration of city affairs. The practical test since the first of July, 1905, has demonstrated that the pathway which Houston is blazing for reform in municipal government in the United States should find many travelers in the future.

This elective commission system is no infringement upon suffrage rights. The ballot is as powerful under the present charter as in the days when the professional politician wielded a marked influence. The five officers named are the only ones made elective the mayor and four aldermen. Under the present system a notable era of economy without niggardliness has been ushered in. Tax collections have reached



Avenue of Oaks

an unprecedented figure, although the rate has been reduced; the sinking fund is growing; the water works have been purchased by the city and a complete duplicate set of machinery installed; municipal bonds and interest are promptly paid; the already excellent police force has improved; the model fire department has been perfected; surplus employees have been ousted; a modern system of municipal accounting declared by experts to be the safest and most perfect yet devised, instituted five years ago, has been continued in force; and all this without jar or friction or attempt to disturb the city's constant progress.

The new charter places in the hands of the people a power so great that no commission would dare draw upon themselves its full weight. The commissioners and mayor can regulate the rates and charges of all the public utilities, while the referendum places within the hands of the voters the granting of important franchises.

During the past year three miles of sanitary sewers were built, eight miles of model vitrified brick pavements laid, many miles of cement sidewalks put down by property holders, four new school houses erected, and the city park lands extended, besides scores of minor improvements of like nature, all without a bond issue, and with plenty of money left in the treasury.

Houston's Material Progress.

In the recital of actual progress Houston has achieved and as pointing certainly to the fairness of the assertions here made, the actual figures, as shown by the public records, are trustworthy evidence open to the investigator.

In the year ending September 1, 1907, the real estate changing hands in Harris County, according to the records in the office of the County Clerk, amounted to over \$14,932,348.00. For the same period in 1906 the total was \$9,416,251.00.

The records in the office of the City Engineer of the



City Hall and Market House



Some Fine Business Bldings

City of Houston show that permits for permanent improvements in the first eight months of 1907 represent a valuation of \$2,177,240.00, these valuations being about one-third of the actual expenditures in bilding improvements. The permits for repairs total \$411,003.00.

The vigorus groth of Houston is also shown by the assest valuation of property within her limits for the past ten years, which increast from \$22,528,103.00

Transportation Facilities.

A GREAT DISTRIBUTING CENTER.

The advantages of Houston as a distributing center are the foundations of her commercial, financial and manufacturing groth. Among the cities of the great Central Southwest country she holds in this respect the leading place as to all classes of transportation—the handling of freight, passengers, mail traffic, ex-



Part of the Gould Terminals

in 1898 to \$51,000,000.00 in 1907, an increase of nearly \$9,000,000.00 over the preceding year.

The State and County valuations of all property in Harris County, of which Houston is the county seat, increast from \$26,939,265.00 in 1895 to over \$61,000000.00 in 1907.

The tax rate for the City, County and State is \$2.70 in all, taxable valuations averaging far belo actual valuations, but under the newly enacted State law valuations are hereafter to be in full, and there will be a proportionate reduction in the rate of taxation.

press traffic, and of telegraf and telefone communication as well. Houston's unsurpast facilities in this respect afford wholesalers, jobbers and manufacturers all that they need to enable them to bild up business of any size thruout the great and groing territory tributary to Houston.

The great government improvement on the Houston Ship Channel insures us for all time the loest freight rates by rail and water; and this is a matter of controlling influence with a wideawake merchant or manufacturer seeking a new location. Rates to

and from the eastern seaboard territory are especially so, and may be obtained by inquiry of the Houston Business League.

Houston's distributing facilities are constantly undergoing improvement and extension to keep pace with the rapidly growing trade of the city. For instance, the Gould interests have recently made an investment of \$750,000.00 in land and terminals along

Houston Ship Channel.

Houston's outlet to the sea is regarded by many as her greatest asset of the future. It guarantees lowest freight rates and makes of this city an inland port second to none of the Gulf Coast; and the day is near when Houston will take first rank as a feeding point for the vast Panama trade to open when that channel



Among the Small Craft

the Houston Ship Channel, on part of which have been erected magnificent railway buildings covering three blocks of ground; and the Southern Pacific System, centering in Houston, is constantly making extensive improvements in its magnificent terminal facilities, as are also the Missouri, Kansas & Texas and Santa Fe Systems. For further information on this subject see the articles headed "Houston Ship Channel" and "The Railroad Capital of the South."

links the Atlantic and Pacific. The National Congress, realizing the importance of the present water carrying trade of this city, has appropriated one million dollars and approved plans for three millions more for the sole purpose of widening and deepening the outlet from Houston to the Gulf of Mexico. Two-thirds of this great public work have already been done and the remainder will be completed with as little delay as the magnitude of the project will permit. An

immense quantity of the freight of the Trans-Mississippi territory now passes thru Houston. This territory, with which we may include the five states north of the Ohio River, is the great producing section of the United States, furnishing most of the grain and meat products of the continent, the lumber of the Central Southwest and the Northwest, the greatest variety and volume of ores, the oil of Texas and the Pacific slope, the fruit and wine from California and other States, Texas cotton, corn, cane and rice, and from the whole section an amount of minor products so vast in the aggregate as to make the figures almost incomprehensible.

The Gulf is the natural pathway from this great section to the markets of the world, and Houston is the most advantageous point of the territory for concentrating, distributing and manufacturing its products. The old east and west long-haul routes have been able to divert much freight from the natural short down-haul routes, because of lack of adequate and safe terminal and transferring facilities on the Gulf. Now that the National Government has responded to the demands of this commerce, and we are to have a secure inland deep water harbor several miles long, affording on each side of the channel unlimited terminal sites for business of every kind, it will not be long until the bulk of the products of the West can come thru Houston.

The amount of products of the Trans-Mississippi country passing thru Houston is greatly increasing every year. With these also come the Pacific imports for the Central, Northern and Eastern sections of the continent, Mexican freights in transit, and every variety of manufactured goods, all in rapidly growing quantity and value.

A statement of the tonnage and value of the freight handled on the ship channel covering the movement of commodities in and out of this port for the year ending August 31, 1907, is as follows:

| | Tons | Value |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Cotton (459,548 bales)..... | 126,375 | \$26,538,897 |
| Coal..... | 6,750 | 37,125 |
| Rice..... | 24,608 | 1,063,065 |
| Lumber and Shingles..... | 82,500 | 1,050,000 |
| Sand..... | 161,535 | 161,535 |
| Shell..... | 30,000 | 45,000 |
| Cord Wood..... | 7,250 | 35,375 |
| Brick..... | 7,250 | 36,250 |
| Hardware and Machinery..... | 7,546 | 754,600 |
| Grain and Feedstuffs..... | 10,000 | 200,000 |
| Groceries and Provisions..... | 7,500 | 375,000 |
| Oil and Gasolin..... | 8,556 | 385,000 |
| Beer and Ice..... | 1,800 | 126,000 |
| Oysters and Fish..... | 1,500 | 45,000 |
| Furniture..... | 800 | 800,000 |
| Roofing Paper..... | 404 | 43,632 |
| Steel Rails..... | 500 | 11,500 |
| Hay..... | 300 | 3,000 |
| Rope..... | 711 | 9,243 |
| Gravel..... | 150 | 150 |
| Slate..... | 142 | 1,492 |
| Miscellaneous..... | 475 | 475,000 |
| Totals..... | 486,652 | \$32,196,864 |

This tonnage expressed in pounds means that 973,304,000 pounds, or 24,332 carloads of 20 tons each, of freight were transported on Buffalo Bayou during the year ending August 31, 1907.

The channel traffic is already anything but an idle dream, as the above figures indicate, and the period of time that will elapse before great ocean going vessels are anchored along the Houston wharves is but brief.

The Railroad Capital of the South.

Houston has the most extensive railroad terminals south of St. Louis. From the railroad standpoint you reach Texas at Houston, and no Southwestern railroad feels fully entrenched in the business of the Southwest until it has terminals here. The roads actually centering or ending at Houston have a length of 10,000 miles, and the connecting systems more than 31,000 miles. North, east, south and west, these rail lines reach forth to the most fertile agricultural sections



Carnegie Library

of Texas and the Southwest, and into the untold areas most suited to cultivation and development. The railways now pay out in Houston more than \$7,000,000 annually in wages and salaries.

Here are some of the factors that have already made Houston rich and strong, and are making her ever more so:

- The Texas & New Orleans Railroad.
- The Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railway.
- The Houston & Texas Central Railroad.
- The New York, Texas & Mexican Railway.
- The Texas Transportation Company.
- The Galveston, Houston & Northern Railway.
- The Houston East & West Texas Railway.
- The San Antonio & Aransas Pass Railway.
- The Santa Fe System.
- The Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway.
- The Galveston, Houston & Henderson Railroad.
- The International & Great Northern Railroad.
- The Houston Tap & Brazoria Railroad.
- The Houston, Oak Lawn & Magnolia Park Railroad.
- The Houston Belt & Terminal Railway.
- The Trinity & Brazos Valley Railway.
- The Beaumont, Sour Lake & Western Railway.
- The St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railroad.

These lines of railway already penetrate, as other lines will soon do, sections of country containing a variety of main products widely differing in feature and development. Two of these are cotton and lumber, which will be separately mentioned hereinafter.

Texas rice, sugar cane, sugar, corn, hay, cattle and oil are other important commodities of the nearby territory which are largely handled. As a single item

country southwest of Houston, with its rice, sugar, cotton, corn and oil.

The Cane Belt Railroad, one of the big Texas short lines, now sends its business into Houston over the tracks of an allied system, the Santa Fe, which has itself within the past few months obtained another entrance into the city over the tracks of the Galveston, Harrisburg & San Antonio Railway, and greatly increased its terminal facilities here.



Great Mercantile and Industrial Concerns and Great Terminals

the product of a sugar mill seventeen miles out from Houston is for an ordinary year 20,000 tons.

In addition to this vast network of railway lines now pouring their immense business into Houston in ever growing volume, the Gould interests, already represented here by four lines in addition to the Houston, Oak Lawn & Magnolia Park Railroad, which is local, proposes to build from Houston another main feeder to connect with the main Louisiana line of the Missouri Pacific System, and also has in contemplation an important extension into the rich

Over one million dollars is now being expended by the Houston Belt & Terminal Company and allied interests in the construction of depot and terminal facilities for these lines in this city, the work transforming into a busy railroad scene a section of Greater Houston heretofore used for residence only. This great system has only recently (February, 1908) transferred to Houston its head offices for the Southwest, which strengthens Houston's unquestionable right to the title at the beginning of this article, "The Railroad Capital of Texas."

At the time of this writing there are rumors and reports, more or less definit, of several new railway enterprises of great importance to the Southwest, but particularly so to Houston. Not from any lack of faith that these enterprises or similar ones will ere long result in new lines of railway terminating in Houston, but because the BUSINESS LEAGUE prefers to state only facts provable, these new enterprises are not here referd to in detail. Every one of them has for its foundation the existence of plenty of territory and business to warrant the construction of a railway, and, indeed, to absolutely assure it, within a short time at all events, if any of the present plans fail.

Cotton Center of the World.

As Texas is by far the leading cotton state of the entire country, so Houston is the leading cotton city, the home of the natural fiber. During the year ending August 31, 1907, the cotton receipts for the city of Houston were 2,967,535 bales, or about one-fourth of the entire crop of the United States, having a valu of over \$152,000,000, while the superior market facilities of this cotton center forced competing markets to cut down the cost of handling chargd against groers from \$5.00 to \$1.00 per bale.

The leading cotton merchants of the world now maintain branches in Houston, the many agents and employes of the cotton firms of the principal cotton centers of America and Europe constituting a numerus colony of wideawake business men of much importance to the city.

With such a foundation, Houston expects to become the metropolis of the manufactured product, as she is already of the raw material. Having cheap fuel, she is now redy for the cotton mills. It is estimated that the entire amount of money invested in Houston in plants for the compression of cotton and for the manufacture of cotton seed oil and cotton seed products is in excess of \$2,000,000.



Central Fire Station



Electric Light and Power Plant

Houston's Lumber Interests.

The vast lumber industry, represented most largely by the long-leaf pine of this State and of Western Louisiana, is tributary to Houston more than to any other city. Houston is fixedly the chief concentrating, distributing and supply point of this industry, the volume and valu of which may be realized when it is stated that \$19,000,000 worth of lumber is sold by Houston concerns annually.

The recent past has witnest a great increase in the volume of lumber business and also in the number of enterprises that handel lumber exclusivly. This is due to the present high price and great demand for lumber.

Nearly all the biggest lumber manufacturing enterprises of the State hav headquarters here and their banking business is also done here. There are few large mills in East Texas in which Houston capital is not interested.

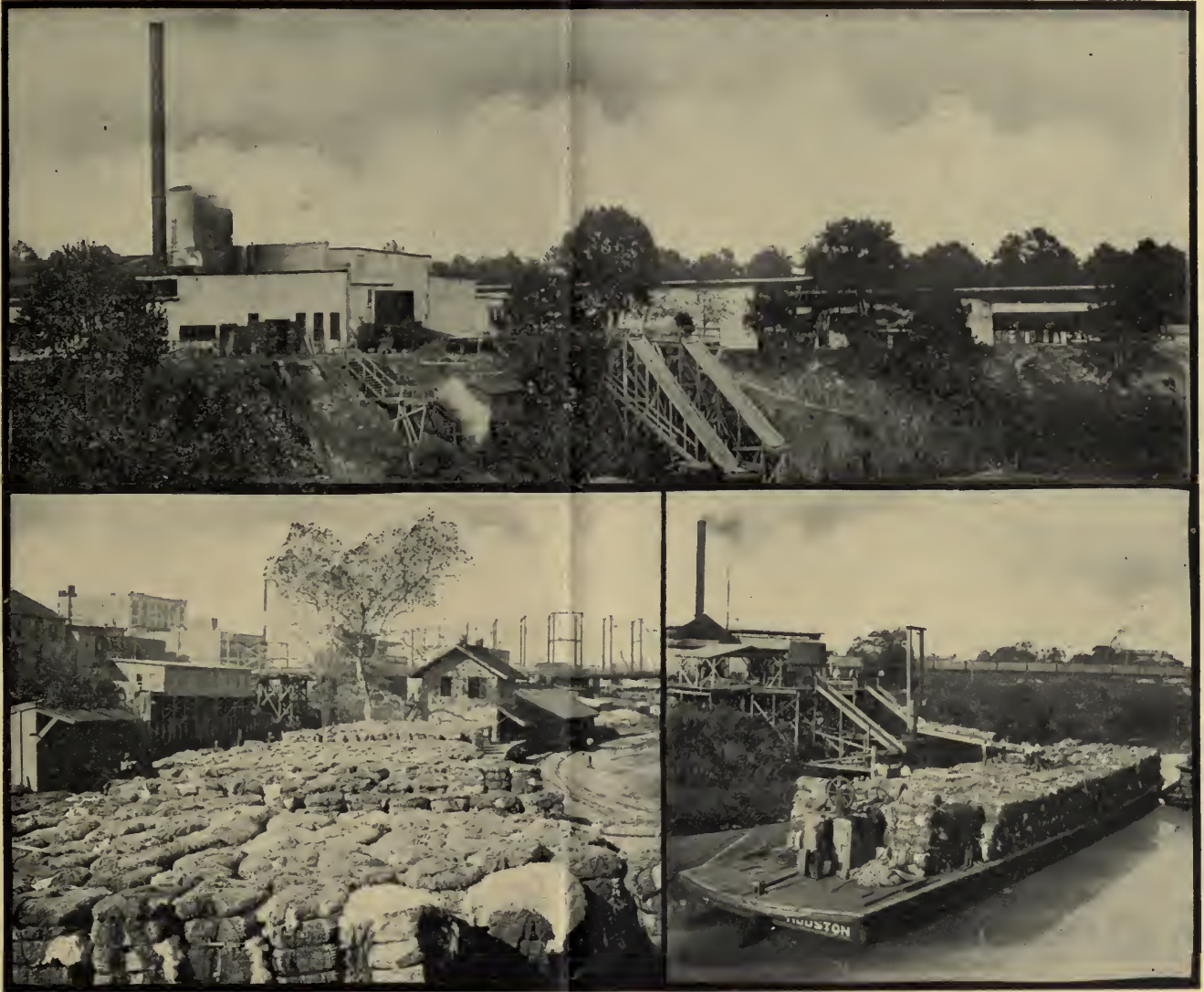
The Texas forests include sixty-one kinds of timber of commercial value; and this latter fact, cupeld with Houston's superiority as a distributing center, is sufficient to warrant the statement that Houston offers the best location in the entire Southwest for wood-working plants of all kinds, such as factories for the making of furniture, wagons, buggies, handels, household articles, etc.

Houston as a Manufacturing Center.

In the growth of her manufacturing industries during the ten years ending with 1900, Houston led in volume and proportion every other trade center in the South. The United States census for 1900 shows 507 industries, an increase of 141 per cent. over 1890, with an increase

erners, cost of materials used and value of products. The manufacturing and allied industries of Houston pay annually over \$6,000,000 in wages.

What has been said elsewhere in this booklet as to railways and transportation is so good an argument in favor of Houston, as a location for manufacturing and distributing business of all kinds, that we desire



Cotton Scenes

of invested capital of 97 per cent; and since 1900, the increase in capital, number of industries and number of wage earners has been larger in proportion than for ten years prior to the 1900 census. Ten years earlier, as shown by the census tables, Dallas was in this respect far ahead of Houston, then the second manufacturing city in the State. Now Houston leads every other city in the State considerably in capital invested, number of establishments, number of wage

to again refer to those subjects all readers interested in any business of such character, especially those seeking new locations. There is absolutely no city in the United States today offering better inducements to manufacturers than Houston, and capitalists contemplating embarking in business in a new field should safeguard their best interests by giving this city a thorough inspection.

The great increase in the manufacturing industries

of Houston in the last few years is due to cheap fuel, cheap sites, unrivald shipping facilities and enormous distributing territory. Hevily stimulated in population by the groth of its supporting territory, the groth of the city's business has been far beyond the increase in population. Houston has markets that will richly support many times the present number of manufacturing enterprises.

There is a demand on the city for manufactures in every line, but especially in the lighter and finer articles, as well as in glass, crockery, pottery, cand goods, woodenware, furniture, vehicles, farm machinery, clothing, dry goods in general, and more especially cotton goods of all kinds. In all of these lines the raw material is at hand to supply the demand of the manufacturer.

Houston affords a wide range in the choice of sites for manufactories, with her numerus railroads and marine shipping lines; and the recently chartered Houston Belt & Terminal Railway Company unites these and adds materially to the availability of locations. Manufacturers who desire information as to cheap sites are invited to call at the office of the Busi-



A Hevy Hardware House

NESS LEAGUE, or to write to the Secretary, who will be glad to furnish required data.

An index to this city's groth in trade and commercial conditions is found in the charter record in the office of the Secretary of State. That record for the year ending August 31, 1907, shows 146 new enterprises were chartered in Houston between that date and August 31, 1906, with a total capital stock amounting to \$14,836,375, while twenty-eight Houston corporations increast their capitalization \$3,340,000. In this respect Houston leads all other Texas cities.

Houston the Rice Center.

A RICH STAPLE.

As alrely shown, Houston has risen to first place in the commerce of the Southwest. By reason of her location and her union with so many lines of railway, Houston taps directly all of the broad coast country and its vast "hinterland" of fertile prairie. Altho the industry is yet in its infancy, the cultivation of rice has gon far beyond the experimental stage.

In 1895, when the cultivation of rice in Texas was wholly an experiment, the crop of the State was planted on 2,000 acres. The experience of rice farmers since then has been so satisfactory that the acreage has increast stedily and rapidly, and the Texas rice crop of 1907 came from something over 250,000 acres. There is a total canal mileage in the Houston rice territory of 844 miles, in addition to the many large farms that are supplied with abundance of water from private wells.

The government statistics gave the Texas crop for 1906 as 2,107,134 bags, on approximately 230,000 acres. Conditions in 1907 were such that it was thot the yield wud be short, but these conditions were reliev'd, and it is safe to say that the yield off the 250,000 acres was at least equal to the yield off 230,000



The Rice Industry

acres in 1906, altho at this writing final figures are not at hand. The highest price paid in 1906 for No. 1, both Honduras and Japan, was about \$3.90. During the year 1905 the price went as high as \$4.25 for first grades. This was caused by a short production, due to the decrease acreage.

The greater part of the Texas crop is now handled by the Houston market, and this will always be the case, no matter what proportions the cultivation of rice shall reach, because the unequal facilities here afforded must make and keep Houston the center of distribution and sale for rice, as they have already done for cotton, lumber and other important products.

Houston's gross bank clearings as certified by the Manager of the Houston Clearing House are set out as follows:

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| 1901..... | \$ 466,426,159 |
| 1902..... | 602,931,516 |
| 1903..... | 696,928,866 |
| 1904..... | 663,672,543 |
| 1905..... | 763,757,337 |
| 1906..... | 1,012,499,099 |
| 1907..... | 1,125,856,913 |

These institutions are not only ready to encourage legitimate enterprises on the part of citizens now engaged in business, but they are on the alert for something new to which they can lend financial assistance.



A New and Important Factory

Houston has four rice mills with a capacity of 4,500 bags per day, and the largest exclusive rice elevator in the rice belt.

Banks and Banking.

Houston's growth along all lines is reflected in her banks, the certain barometers of trade and material progress. The stability of these institutions is adamant. In the panic of 1907 this city did not witness the failure of a single one of her national or state institutions, and never for one moment did there exist a feeling of uneasiness. Accommodations were but little restricted throughout the troublesome period, and the day the New York banks announced that their share was over there was shipped from Houston \$200,000 in gold from one of her State banks, indicating the ample protection afforded depositors.

The unusually strong lending capacity of Houston banking institutions makes it as easy for reputable merchants, manufacturers and other business men to secure needed funds in Houston as in any city in America.

In buildings and equipment the Houston banks are at the front; the handsome structures occupied by the First National and Commercial National and the new home of the Houston Land & Trust Company and Lumberman's National Bank exciting the admiration of every visitor to the city.

In August, 1905, a new State banking law went into effect. This law is at once liberal to and watchful of the institutions founded under its provisions. It creates a wider field than that open to the National banks and makes available sources of revenue for banking and trust companies heretofore denied.



Street Car

HOUSTON IS THE RAILROAD CAPITAL AND C



A Scene in the S



us and Yard

LEARING HOUSE OF THE GREAT SOUTHWEST



Railway Yards

Educational Advantages.

The public school facilities of Houston are most excellent. There are thirty-four public school buildings, over 14,594 children of scolarastic age, the largest school population in the State, and 228 teachers, occupying 214 rooms. Additions are rapidly provided, from time to time, on account of the increasing demand upon existing facilities. Adequate appropriation is made in February of each year by the city for the maintenance of the schools, and, in addition to this, there is the per capita payment by the State of about \$5.00 annually. There are also in Houston thirty-four

the State, and of two excellent musical colleges, Diehl's Conservatory of Music and the Houston Conservatory of Music; besides which there are the nurses' training school of St. Joseph's Infirmary, the Barnett School, and five modern business and commercial schools. The Rice Institute, the greatest of our educational establishments, is treated fully in the next article.

Texas has the largest permanent school fund in the Union, being more than \$50,000,000, including the funds of the State University and the other State educational institutions. Of this approximately \$34,000,000 are in Texas county and city bonds and land notes, and the remainder chiefly in lands.



A \$175,000 Church



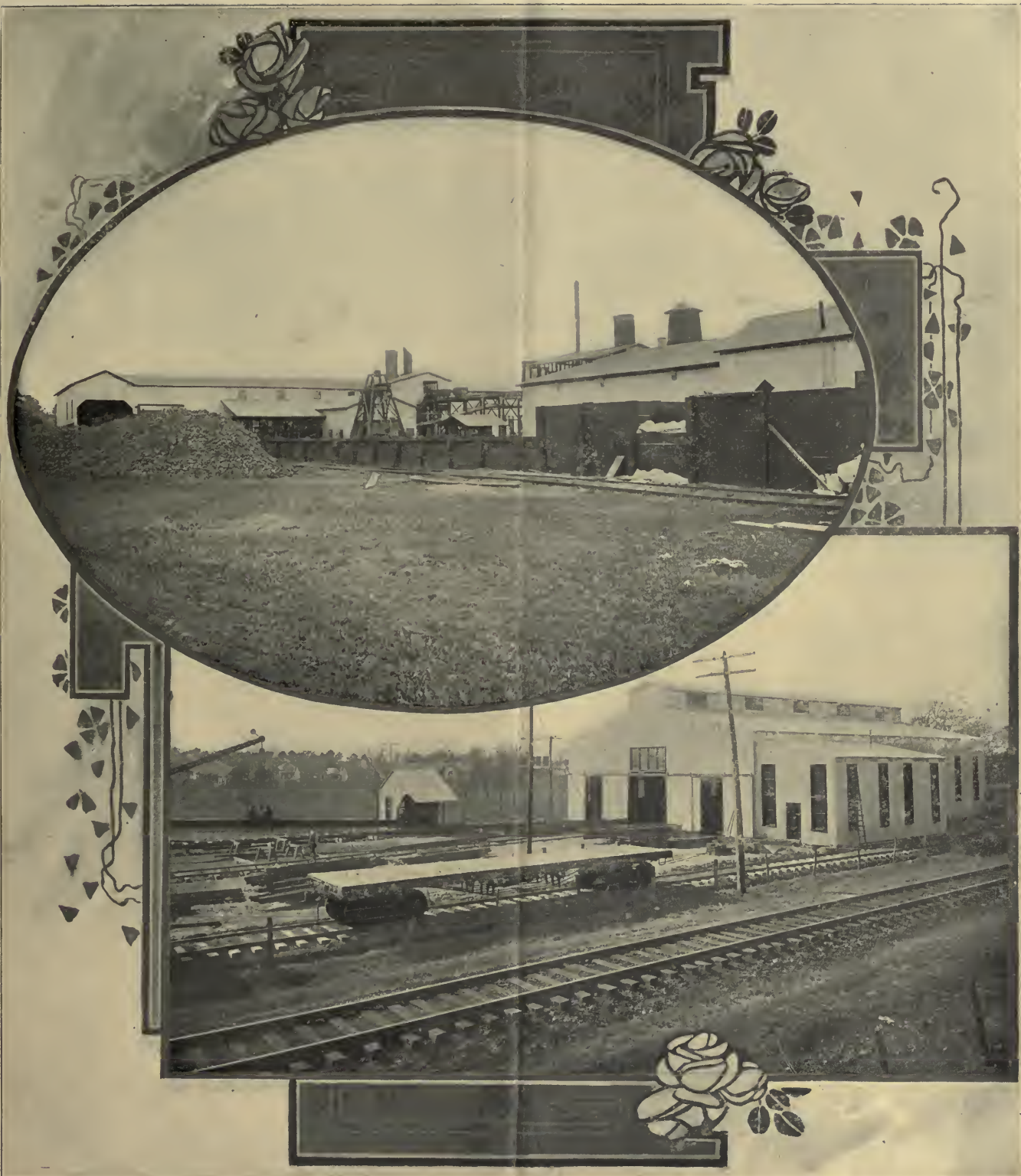
\$200,000 Y. M. C. A. Building

private educational institutions, mostly of small size, but a number take high rank in the State and South. St. Thomas College for young men and boys has but recently completed a college building and dormitories, involving an outlay of many thousands of dollars. The Dominican Sisterhood has lately established St. Agnes Academy, for the education of girls and young women, with a magnificent college building occupying a splendid site, broad grounds and ideal location.

Houston is also the home of the Texas Dental College, the most complete and modern institution of the kind in the South, and the only one of importance in

Rice Polytechnic Institute.

Plans are now under consideration for the early construction of the William Marsh Rice Institute for the advancement of Literature, Science and Art. On December 29, 1907, Prof. Edgar Odell Lovett, of Princeton University, who possesses an enviable record among the country's educators, was selected as the head of this great institution. Under his direction this important college will be organized. The Institute was founded in the year 1892 by the late William Marsh Rice, of New York City, who endowed it with



A New Car Wheel Plant
 (Houston has two great plants of this kind)

A Great New Steel Plant
 (Showing beginning of additional construction)

his promissory note, payable at his death, in the sum of \$200,000. Following this he made during his life additions to the endowment fund consisting of a tract of six acres of land in the City of Houston, now worth about \$100,000; nearly 10,000 acres of pasture and agricultural lands in Jones County, Texas, worth about \$10.00 per acre; the Rice Hotel property in the center of the city, worth about \$800,000, and two bodies of heavy timber lands in Louisiana, aggregating 48,000 acres, worth about \$3,000,000.

In addition to these gifts, which Mr. Rice, joined by his wife, Elizabeth Baldwin Rice, made to the endowment fund of the Rice Institute, his will bequeaths

tration; a museum of the materials of the arts, sciences, trades and commerce, in their raw state, and in their successive processes and stages of manufacture and use; and a great laboratory for demonstration and experiment in teaching and lectures.

Tuition will be free and open to all, non-sectarian and non-partisan; but residents of the City of Houston will have first right of entrance. After Houston, residents of any other part of the State of Texas will be admitted to the benefits and enjoyments of the institute.

The William M. Rice Institute, with its very large endowment fund, is easily the wealthiest educational



A Part of a Great Car Wheel Manufactory

the bulk of his estate "unto the Wm. M. Rice Institute for the Advancement of Literature, Science and Art, a corporation domiciled in the City of Houston, in Harris County, Texas."

Putting all these gifts together, the endowment fund will reach a sum in excess of \$6,000,000 at present valuations.

This institute is to be a polytechnic school for males and females, designed to give instruction on the applications of science and art to the practical occupations of life. It will establish and maintain a free library and reading room, and galleries of art; complete collections of apparatus and models for illus-

tration, public or private, in the entire South. Its important bearing upon the destinies of the city so fortunate as to be its home will be appreciated by intelligent people everywhere.

Churches, Libraries, Societies and Clubs.

As to churches, all the important denominations are represented; the buildings are creditable in architecture and ample in size, and proportionate to the wealth and population of the city. One of these church edifices is the largest in the entire South, and compares favorably with the most costly churches in



A Group of Good Apartment Buildings

the great cities of the North. The churches keep pace always with the general growth of the city.

Houston has a magnificent public library, endowed in part by Andrew Carnegie, others having made liberal gifts for a Juvenil Library and a Western Historical Library.

The recently completed home of the Thalian Club is one of the most beautiful club houses in the entire South, reflecting the taste and culture of its members.

At the corner of Fannin Street and McKinney Avenue is the magnificent \$200,000 Y. M. C. A. build-



Elevator and Rice Mill Scenes

All of the important secret orders are here, with large membership rolls; and there are many useful, active and interesting private clubs of every kind and character, some of the latter having expensive buildings of their own.

ing, the funds for the construction of which were raised in a campaign of but two weeks duration.

One of Houston's citizens, George H. Hermann, has recently donated a block of ground and \$50,000 for the erection of a Charity Hospital.



A New Oil Plant, Showing Shipping Facilities



A Group of Factories

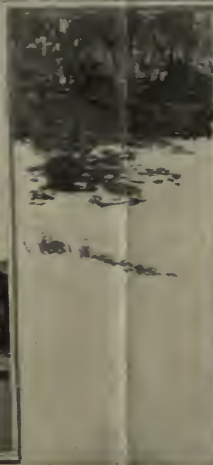
The Houston Press.

Houston has thirty-two newspapers and periodicals, two of these being daily papers, sixteen weeklies, two semi-weeklies, six monthlies and one semi-monthly.

Besides the papers devoted chiefly to general news and comment, this list includes publications in the interest of ethics, education, religion, general agriculture, the rice industry, the lumber, cotton and kindred trades, medical science, sporting, truck groing



Main Street From Franklin Avenue



Some Fine Churches

New Government Blding.

POSTOFFICE STATISTICS.

Houston's postoffice is perhaps one of the surest

and shipping, wit and humor and insurance. The Houston Daily Post is the leading morning paper of the State, and the Houston Daily Chronicle occupies the same position among the evening papers.



Some of the Finer Residences of
Houston

indices to her groth and progres. The following table of postoffice receipts for the past seven years, being for the fiscal year ending June 30 in each case, is worthy of careful reading:

| | |
|-----------|--------------|
| 1901..... | \$118,180.93 |
| 1902..... | 143,730.92 |
| 1903..... | 168,514.78 |
| 1904..... | 194,102.44 |
| 1905..... | 210,456.34 |
| 1906..... | 229,897.63 |
| 1907..... | 292,114.35 |

In order to provide adequate facilities for the hand-

City Drainage and Sewerage.

We have a first-class modern system for disposing of the sewage, with forty-six miles of sewer mains and condits. The drainage has been much improved in the past few years, and further great improvements will soon be undertaken. An inexhaustible supply of pure artesian water, suitable for all manufacturing and household uses, is easily obtainable in any part of Houston at depths of from 500 to 1,000 feet, and the water works system furnishes this thruout the city. The surface of the ground upon which the city stands has sufficient elevation to be drained at mod-



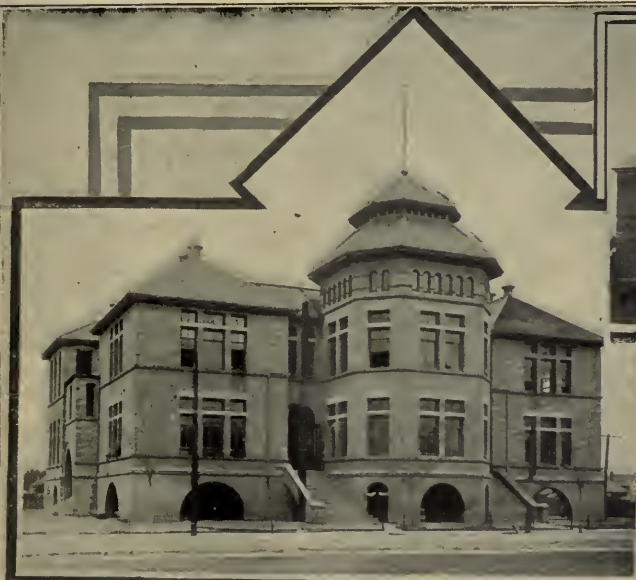
Scene at Sam Houston Park

ling of this rapidly groing business, Congress has appropriated the sum of \$400,000 for the construction of a modern Federal bilding in this city. In addition to the sum appropriated for the bilding, there was appropriated \$120,000 with which a block of ground was purchast near the center of the city. Before this issu of the League's booklet is exausted the government will begin the erection of a splendid home for the postoffice, as well as the offices of the collector of this port, the United States District Court and all Federal officers. Bids hav alrely been accepted and the work is to be rusht, because of the crying need for even the necessary room to accommodate the postal business of this rapidly groing city.

erate expense, yet is sufficiently smooth to be well suited to all kinds of local carrying, especially the hauling of hevy merchandise, which, in a commercial city, is of much importance.

Streets and Roads.

The city government has paved the entire main business part of the city with asphalt or paving brick, an aggregate of forty-four miles, and within the past three years has expended over \$325,000 in improvements in the more important streets leading to every section of the city. In addition to this, Harris County, of which Houston is the center, has recently expended about \$700,000 in making permanent and first-class country roadways leading from the city in all direc-



Some of the Public Seools

tions. The importance of this need not be pointed out, as it will be seen by all that these modern scientific roads must be of unmesurd valu, alike to city and county. An additional fund of \$500,000 has been pledgd to be expended in furthering road and bridge improvements thruout the county, this special bond issu having just been voted, along with a bond

issu for \$500,000 for the construction of a new county court house to accommodate the three district courts, the county court and the various county offices.

Climate and Health.

Many of our Northern frends who hav not spent a summer in Texas think that our summers are op-



Infirmaries

presively warm; but this is an error. The thermometer has never been known to record a higher temperature in this section of the country than it does in many Northern cities every year.

A record kept for the last thirty years shows the mean annual temperature to be 69 degrees; in July, 80 to 85 degrees; in January, 55 to 65 degrees; maximum, 95 to 100 degrees; minimum, 20 to 30 degrees above zero.

The average rainfall is about the same as in Illinois and Missouri. The prevailing winds are south and southeasterly.

The average annual death rate in Houston for the past ten years has been about 15 per 1,000, which is below the average death rate of cities of like population.

There is no more healthful city in the United States than Houston, the glorious Gulf breezes, the excellent

sewerage system, the semi-outdoor life and the general sanitary conditions affording relief from diseases that afflict many other places.

Draining the Gulf Coast Country.

Nineteen hundred and seven has seen the beginning of a general movement to drain Texas Gulf Coast lands. Operating under the law enacted by the Texas legislature in the winter of 1906-7, the taxpayers are forming local drainage districts and opening public drains that will carry off the surplus rainfall of the winter season. This is a most excellent system, as districts where such drains are needless are not required to pay part of the expense, and it is wholly within the control of the different localities. Such drainage in every case doubles or triples the market value of the land. This Gulf Coast land, as rich as any that lies out of doors, is capable of producing, when drained, winter fruit and garden truck as fine as any grown in Florida or Southern California. Already a large and profitable business of this kind has been built up in the territory tributary to Houston. Men are making a good living and putting money in the bank with their earnings from five and ten-acre farms. There is so much land available, and so few people on it, thus far, that land values are still low. The opening of the year 1908, however, has witnessed a tremendous inflow of home-seekers eagerly examining and buying these coast fruit and truck lands. Values are rising, and it is certain that here in the Houston country the experience of Southern California is rapidly to be repeated. Lands that are selling for from \$10 to \$20 an acre today will, without a doubt, be made worth \$500 an acre through the development of orange, fig, lemon, grape-fruit and other orchards, and through the growth of the winter garden trucking business, inside of ten years. What can be done has been shown beyond question by enterprising individuals during the ten years last past. For example: R. H. Bushway bought 200 acres of raw land at Alcoa, twenty-nine miles south of Houston on the Santa Fe, seven years ago. He paid \$22.50 an acre for it. He has made it worth an average of \$400 an acre, draining it and planting fruits and flowers. Many others throughout the Gulf Coast Country have done as well. The drainage law, opening a way by which drainage can be got at low cost and on easy terms, makes certain the development of the whole region upon the same scale. It is today the best opportunity for investment in productive lands on the whole American continent. Houston, as the chief shipping center of this region, is rapidly becoming a clearing house for a rich trade in these products.

Street Railways.

Houston has an excellent and thoroughly modern electric street railway system, embracing fifteen routes and covering over sixty-five miles of streets. In addition to rapid extension of lines much attention has been given to betterment of equipment, and the double



Park and Driveway Scenes in
Houston

truck cars are the same as to be found in the large and progressive centers of the country. Tunnels and subways have been constructed, carrying the lines under the more dangerous railroad crossings, and the Houston Electric Company has completed an elaborate system of car sheds and barns with accompanying repair shops, the outlay in that direction being more than \$80,000.

The No-Tsu-Oh Carnival.

Each recurring November witnesses a festival in Houston which is unique. It has no counterpart in all the United States. It has a touch of the New Orleans Mardi Gras and of the once popular street fair of the North, and yet is neither. There has been formed what is known as the No-Tsu-Oh Carnival Association, with abundant capital; and each fall, under its supervision, an entire week is given over to fun and frolic upon the streets of the city and within the inclosure where most of the special shows and amusement devices are centered. Crowds throng the streets and engage in confetti battles and pranks that turn day and night into one grand recess from everyday cares. A gorgeous illuminated night parade follows the triumphal entry of the carnival king into the city, and throughout the week fantastic pageants and other demonstrations of various and unusual character hold the attention of the populace and the thousands of visitors who flock to the city to take part in the jollity. The royal ball of King Nottoc, monarch of the carnival, is a State society function that for richness and splendor ranks with the notable amusement events of the country.

Other Advantages.

There is sound reason for every step in advance that the City of Houston has taken since her birth. Our magnificent shipping facilities are but the outgrowth of the situation, which makes Houston the logical distributing center of the great Southwest, the key to land and sea. Here water commerce greeted

the railroad projector, and the resultant growth was inevitable.

Surrounding Houston is a magnificent farming section. First it was the ideal grazing country. It remains such today, but, agricultural demands have demonstrated the great productiveness of the soil, and the plow is driving the herds before it. Rice, cotton, sugar cane, oats, corn and potatoes are making the farmer rich and Houston the center of a thickly settled and rapidly developing agricultural section. Diversification has been the cry of the experts to the farmer and planter of the South, and diversification finds its truest exposition in the splendid farming

counties surrounding Houston and throughout the Gulf Coast Country. Truck farming is an industry of importance, and Houston is the market and shipping center.

The last six years have witnessed the development in Texas of a series of oil fields that have taken the lead in all the world in point of production; and these oil fields are supplying Houston with the cheapest of fuel for manufacturing purposes. Texas recently produced the greatest yield of crude oil ever credited to a single state in a single year. Houston is in the very heart and center of the oil producing district, the great Humble field being in Harris County and but seventeen miles from Houston; it is also the home of most of the wealthy oil operators in this territory.

New lines of railway, the rice and kindred agricultural industries, the government harbor work, the concentration of the lumber industries, the incoming of wealthy farmers and investors from every part of the country, new industrial enterprises and many other important elements have entered into the interesting tale of progress. Inflated claims and unfair advertising have not been resorted to. The whole story is one of solid facts and legitimate business that speak for themselves. These facts have for several years spoken so clearly that they have begotten in the minds of the people of Houston the conviction that theirs is to become a great city. This conviction is shared by the state at large and by the Southwest generally, and is so firm and widespread that it has become an asset of much importance in the growth of the city.



Pencil Factory Scenes

Anyone desiring a copy of this pamphlet can obtain one by addressing a letter to—

**HOUSTON BUSINESS LEAGUE,
HOUSTON, TEXAS.**



